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January 9, 2007

TO: Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: J. Tyler McCauley 
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – DOWNS AND
MARTIN CHILDREN SERVICES GROUP HOME**

We have completed a review of Downs and Martin Children Services Group Home (Group Home or Agency) operated by Downs and Martin Children Services, Incorporated. The Group Home contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation).

Downs and Martin Children Services Group Home is a six-bed facility, which provides care for boys ages 6-18 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Downs and Martin Children Services Group Home was providing services for four DCFS children, one Riverside County child, and one San Bernardino County child.

Downs and Martin Children Services Group Home is located in the San Bernardino County.

Scope of Review

The purpose of the review is to determine whether the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. Additionally, the review covers basic child safety and licensing issues, and includes an evaluation of the Agency's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, a facility inspection, and interviews with children placed in the Group Home at the time of the review.

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Interviews with children are designed to obtain their perspectives on the program services provided by the Agency, and to ensure adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

Summary of Findings

Generally the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. The Agency needs to address several deficient areas.

Downs and Martin Children Services Group Home needs to remove the trash and a shed from the back yard; paint the walls throughout the home; replace the carpet in the living room, and repair the carpet in the hallway; repair the desk in the living room; clean the sofa in the game room; replace the refrigerator shelves; provide window coverings in bedroom one; provide a sufficient supply of perishable foods; maintain current Needs and Services Plans; include the treatment team and input from the child in the development and implementation of the Needs and Services Plans; develop comprehensive Needs and Services Plans that include short and long term goals; maintain current court authorizations, and documentation to show that children taking psychotropic medication are routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist; provide children with the required minimum weekly allowance; and encourage and assist children in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Attached is a detailed report of the review.

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. In response to the recommendations made in the report, the Agency's management completed a corrective action plan (attached) which we approved. We thank the management and staff for their cooperation during our review.

If you have any questions, please contact me, or have your staff contact Mike Pirolo at (626) 293-1110.

JTM:MP:CC:asl

http://auditor.co.la.ca.us/group_home.asp

Attachments

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer
Patricia S. Ploehn, Director, DCFS
Robert B. Taylor, Chief Probation Officer
Emmet Downs, Executive Director, Downs and Martin Children Services
Public Information Office
Audit Committee

Downs and Martin Children Services Group Home
2829 South Cedar Ridge Place
Ontario, California 91762
Phone: (909) 923-0735
License Number: (909) 923-0735
Rate Classification Level: 10

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Comments:

Downs and Martin Children Services Group Home is located in a residential community. The exterior of the Group Home is well maintained. The front yard is clean and adequately landscaped. However, there is scattered trash and a broken metal shed in the back yard.

There is adequate furniture, lighting, and storage space. The Group Home provides a home-like environment. However, the interior of the Group Home is not well maintained. The walls are dirty throughout the house, the living room carpet is stained, and the hallway carpet is frayed. The desk is broken in the living room, the sofa in the game room is dirty, and there are several shelves missing in the refrigerator.

Overall, children's bedrooms are well maintained, and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate furniture, lighting, and storage space. The mattresses are comfortable, and the beds all have a full complement of linens. Children's sleeping arrangements are appropriate. Window screens are in good repair. However, the curtains in bedroom one are torn.

The Group Home maintains age appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV, and a DVD player. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of non perishable foods; however, a sufficient supply of perishable foods is not maintained.

Recommendations

1. Downs and Martin management:

- a. Remove the trash and shed from the back yard.**
- b. Paint the walls throughout the home.**

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- c. Replace the carpet in the living room.**
- d. Repair the carpet in the hallway.**
- e. Repair or replace the broken desk in the living room.**
- f. Clean the sofa in the game room.**
- g. Replace the missing shelves in the refrigerator.**
- h. Replace the torn curtains in bedroom one.**
- i. Maintain a sufficient supply of perishable foods.**

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

Children meet the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Children are assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.

The Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) are not developed or implemented by the treatment team. The NSPs are not current, comprehensive, and do not include short and long term goals.

Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services.

Recommendations

2. Downs and Martin Children Services management:

- a. Maintain current Needs and Services Plans.**
- b. Include the treatment team in the development and implementation of the Needs and Services Plans.**
- c. Develop comprehensive Needs and Services Plans that are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, time limited and include short and long term goals.**

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

Children are attending school. Children are provided with educational support and resources to meet their educational needs, and are progressing satisfactorily in school. The Group Home's program includes the development of children's daily living, self-help, and survival skills.

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides children with sufficient recreational activities, and leisure time. Children are provided with opportunities to participate in planning activities.

Children participate in extra-curricular, enrichment, and social activities in which they have an interest.

The Group Home provides transportation to and from the activities.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

V. Psychotropic Medication

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents

Comments:

One child does not have a current court authorization for psychotropic medication. There is no documentation that children are routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist.

Children are informed about their psychotropic medication, and are aware of their right to refuse medication.

Medication distribution logs are properly maintained.

Recommendations

3. Downs and Martin Children Services management:

- a. Maintain current court authorizations for all children taking psychotropic medication.**
- b. Maintain documentation to show that children taking psychotropic medication are routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist.**

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment –Interviews with children

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

Children are informed about the Group Home's policies and procedures. Children report that they feel safe in the Group Home, and are provided with appropriate staff supervision. Children express satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff, and report that staff treats them with respect and dignity.

Children report that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. Children are able to make and receive personal telephone calls, send and receive unopened mail, and have private visitors. Children are able to attend religious services of their choice.

Children report that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Children report satisfaction with meals and snacks.

Children receive voluntary medical, dental, and psychiatric care.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VII. Clothing and Allowance

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity, and the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance to children. Children are provided with opportunities to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to children is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

Children spend their allowances as they choose. However, the Group Home does not provide children with the required minimum weekly allowance.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items.

Children are not encouraged or assisted in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Recommendations

4. Downs and Martin Children Services management:

- a. Provide children with the required minimum weekly allowance.**
- b. Encourage and assist children in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.**



Downs & Martin Children Services

Corrective Action Plan

I. Facility and Environment

1. Downs and Martin management

- A. I have removed all trash from the backyard. The trash was from remodeling the kitchen. The kitchen has been remodeled with new kitchen cabinets and light fixture.
- B. DMCS painted the entire interior of the facility, including the ceilings.
- C. DMCS had living room carpet cleaned monthly until replacing carpet.
- D. DMCS had carpet in the hallway repaired and cleaned until replacing carpet.
- E. DMCS has replaced the desk in the living room where the resident use there computer.
- F. DMCS has replaced the sofa in the game room with a new sofa.
- G. DMCS has purchased another refrigerator in the facility.
- H. DMCS has replaced the torn closet curtain in bedroom #1.
- I. DMCS has and will maintain sufficient supply of perishable foods. DMCS shops for perishable foods weekly.

II. Program Services

1. Downs and Martin Children Services management

- A. DMCS has communicated with in-house social worker on the importance of completing each need and service plan, to include short and long term goals of each resident.
- B. DMCS has created an in-house treatment team which includes, administrator, one morning child care worker, one evening child care worker, facility manager, in-house social worker, case carrier social worker, and in-put from residents school. With this team of people including the resident is who each needs and service plan is implemented.
- C. Each needs and service plan developed, will be comprehensive and specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, time limited and include short and long term goals. In-house social worker is aware of all of these items.

III. Education and Emancipation Services

1. No recommendations

IV. Recreation and Activities

1. No recommendations

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Downs & Martin Children Services

V. Psychotropic Medication

1. Downs and Martin Children Services management

- A. Downs and Martin has psychotropic medication forms for all residents taking medication. DMCS has contacted the necessary individuals to attain the psych. Form needed for David Silva. David Silva has not been given psychotropic medication until this matter has been resolved. David's form has been sent to court to be updated. This will be resolved by the first week of December.
- B. DMCS has documentation stating that each child given psychotropic medication is routinely seen by a licensed psychiatrist.

VI. Personal Rights

1. No recommendations

VII. Clothing and Allowance

1. Downs and Martin Children Services management

- A. DMCS provides weekly allowance, the minimum amount of \$7.00. Each resident receives their allowance based on behavior in facility, chores, and how resident interacts with other residents and staff
- B. DMCS provides cameras for resident to take pictures on outings for themselves and for the facility.

Downs and Martin will abide by all the recommendations given by Los Angeles Out-of-home management and will continue to provide an safe environment for each resident. DMCS is committed, that all resident has the type of environment to be successful in the areas in which each resident can be successful.

Thank You


Emmett Downs, Administrator